

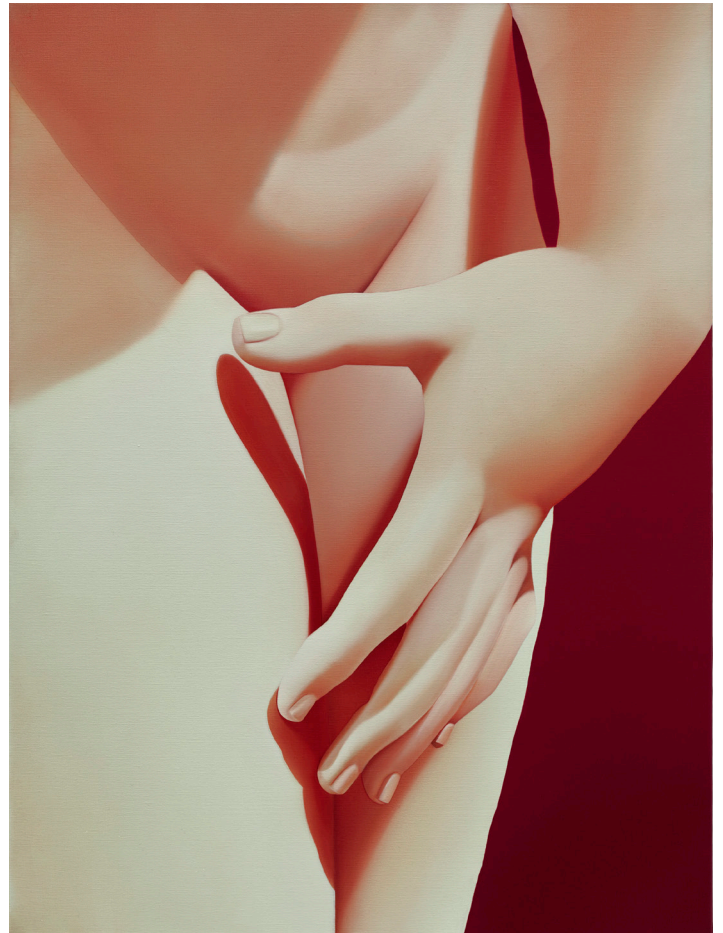
Vivian Greven

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11/5–29/6/2019

I am living now. That means I am constantly surrounded by contemporary influences. It's highly inspiring that everything is always available through the digital screen on the internet. Thus, even the oldest relicts of existence are as contemporary as a limited edition of a MAC glitter lipstick. There is no chronological order. Everything is now.

(Vivian Greven)



0V I, 2019

oil on canvas
120×90 cm

Vivian Greven's painting is based on an adept play with various notion of bodies, being and representation, with concepts of classical antiquity merging with pop art and digital image worlds. Vivian Greven's painting is characteristic of our present times, which are shaped by the internet and social media and thus dissolve the hierarchies between original, reproduction and simulation. The motif of interpersonal contact is pivotal. The art historical and contemporary historical nestling corresponds with Greven's painterly treatment of surfaces. Parts of her painting rise as actual reliefs that encounter sprayed or painted fictions of bodies and space. The aesthetic of her pictures vacillates between the vocabulary of physical painting and the ethereal illusion of LCD windows.

Vivian Greven's current show and series titled 0V is characterized by the conceptual play between corporeality and transcendent spheres. The central motif is Venus and the history of her depiction in art and significance in society. Venus is considered the goddess of both earthly and heavenly love, known for her beauty and fertility. In art history, however, Venus as an overly stylized human figure is almost always depicted without a genital sex. In this sense, the title of the exhibition, 0V, is a conceptual word play with the meanings "Zero Venus" but also "Zero Vivian", and in the end raises

the question of what authentic identity is. For this optimization of the human body found throughout art history culminates for the time being in our current digital world of artificial intelligence and body syntheses. On social media channels such as Instagram and Facebook, the body is literally “de-secularized” and turned into a variable surface. While the painting Ode still is focused on the representation of personal interaction, the works 0V I, 0V II, 0V III, Aort I and Aort II present the motif of Venus exclusively in fragments, as “close-ups” of certain body parts, so to speak. As opposed to the art-historical tradition, Vivian Greven is not concerned with the eroticism of Venus, but with the sensory “scanning” for what is familiar. In her painting, the alternation between surfaces shifting into each other and illusionist “sculpturality” involves the viewer in a search for authentic identity. In our mind’s eye, the entire repertoire of cultural knowledge of the depiction of bodies and the attendant social notions of ideals inevitably unfolds. And at the same time, Vivian Greven’s paintings catapult us into the here and now. The motif of the martini glass continues this on a different level. Although they are figurative, the glasses appear as abstract counterparts of the depiction of Venus. Like “burning glasses”, they focus the gaze on the reality of what lies “behind”. Yet nothing physically tangible can be recognized. This proverbial “emptiness” forms the option of numerous new possibilities of (self-)definitions.



Ode, 2019

oil and acrylic on canvas
150×110 cm

Biographical note

Vivian Greven, born in 1985, lives in Düsseldorf. She is already represented in internationally renowned museum collections such as the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and in September 2019 she will participate in the show “Jetzt! Junge Malerei in Deutschland” at the Kunstmuseum Bonn, the Kunstsammlung Chemnitz – Museum Gunzenhauer, the Museum Wiesbaden and the Deichtorhallen Hamburg. Her works have also been on view in international exhibitions, including recently at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, the Sammlung Philara Düsseldorf, the Braunschfelder Family Collection Cologne and the Salzburger Kunstverein. Furthermore we are delighted that Vivian Greven just has received the Marianne-Defet-Painting-Award.

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